



**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE: Zoning**  
**REQUIREMENTS FOR PLACING A**  
**SEA CARGO CONTAINER ON A PRIVATE LOT**

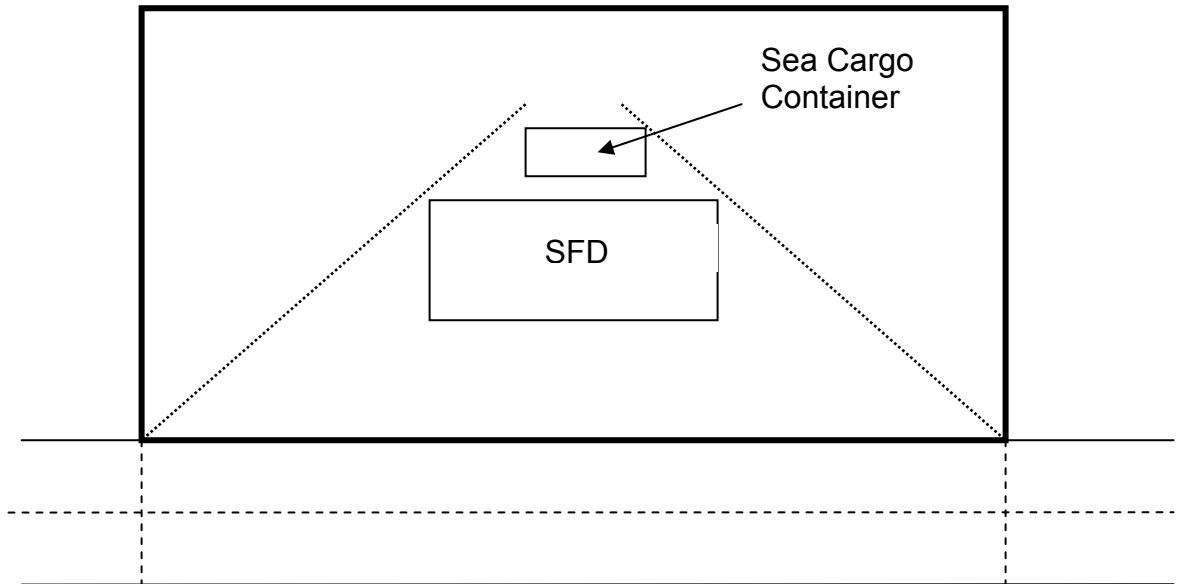
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**Pursuant to Section 6162 of the Zoning Ordinance,  
a building permit is required to place a Sea Cargo Container  
on a lot and a demolition permit to remove a Sea Cargo Container**

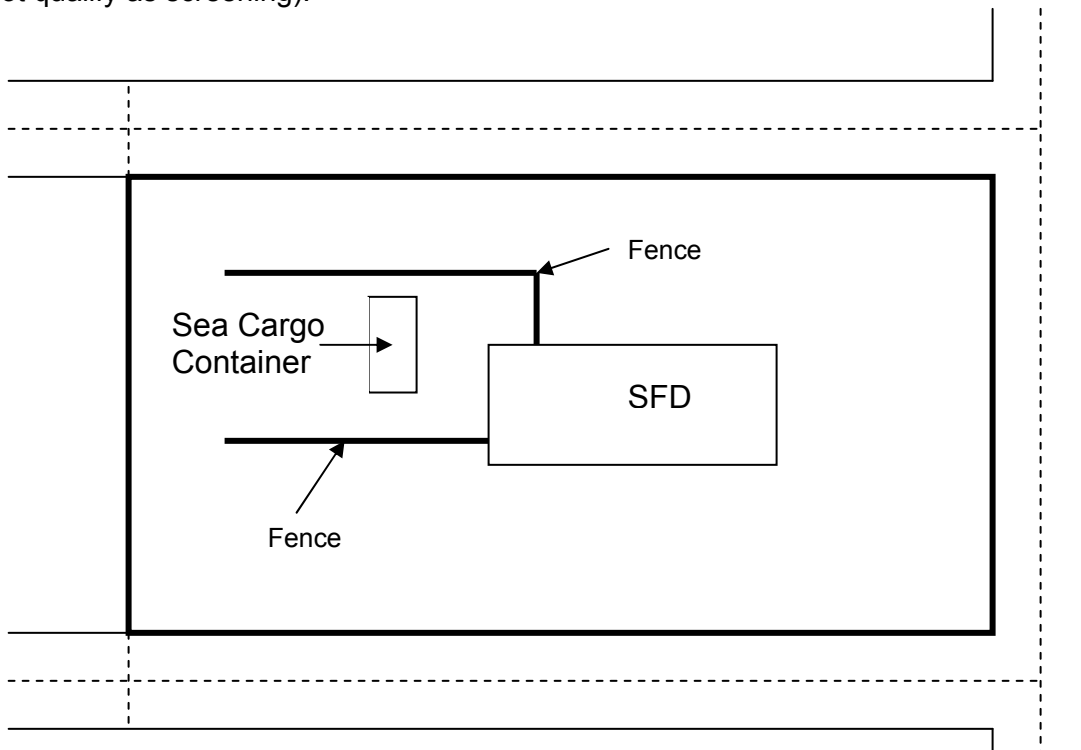
**A. Requirements: before placing a Sea Cargo Container on a lot, you must fully comply with Section 6162 of the County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance:**

1. The subject building site contains a legal primary use (residential and/or agricultural). Property owners claiming to be a primary agricultural use must provide at least one of the following certificates before a building permit for a cargo container can be issued.
  - a. Copy of Schedule F of the property owner's previous years Income Tax Return;
  - b. Operation Identification Number (a "P" for production agriculture will supersede the identification number) – issued by County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures;
  - c. Restricted Materials Permit – issued by County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures;
  - d. Nursery License – issued by California Department of Food and Agriculture;
  - e. Organic Grower License – issued by California Department of Food and Agriculture; or,
  - f. Certified Grower License – issued by County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures.
2. On building sites where the primary use is residential a Sea Cargo Container shall only be allowed if it is not visible from that portion of any road (whether public, private, and/or private road easement) that directly abuts the subject parcel. If existing landscaping is used as screening, it shall be indicated on the building plans and photos shall be submitted as evidence (See next page for illustration only). If fencing is used as screening, please see Section 6708 of the Zoning Ordinance for fencing regulations.

Possible location of a Sea Cargo Container, because the container is not visible from abutting street. (A street is a County road, State highway, public road, street or alley, or private thoroughfare or easement (or proposed private thoroughfare or easement shown on a recorded parcel map) not less than 10 feet in width which affords primary access to an abutting lot.)



Possible location of a Sea Cargo Container, because the container is screened by an existing fence (see Section 6708 of the Zoning Ordinance for fencing regulations). A Sea Cargo Container can only be screened by existing landscaping (new landscaping does not qualify as screening).



3. On building sites of less than 2 acres (net) where the primary use is residential only one Sea Cargo Container is allowed, not exceeding 320 square feet and

the container is only permitted for up to 180 consecutive days, starting from the date of permit issuance. A demolition permit is required to confirm removal of the Sea Cargo Container.

On building sites of more than 2 acres (net) with a legally established primary use, a Sea Cargo Container(s) is allowed if it complies with the other requirements of Section 6162.

4. Sea Cargo Containers must meet setback requirements for accessory structures. (If the total square footage of all existing and/or proposed accessory structures exceeds 1,000 square feet or 25% of the living area of the principal residence, whichever is greater, a setback of least 25 feet from property lines is required).
5. The square footage of the Sea Cargo Container shall be added to the allowable combined square footage of all existing and/or proposed accessory structures.
  - a. On lots of less than one acre gross, the combined area of all detached non-habitable accessory structures (including Sea Cargo Containers) shall not exceed 1,000 square feet or 25% of the living area of the principal residence, whichever is greater (see #3 above).
  - b. On lots of one acre gross or larger but less than 2 acres, the combined area of all detached non-habitable accessory structures (including Sea Cargo Containers) shall not exceed 1500 square feet or 25% of the living area of the principal residence, whichever is greater (see #3 above).
  - c. On lots of 2 acres or larger but less than 4 acres, the combined area of all detached non-habitable accessory structures (including Sea Cargo Containers) shall not exceed 2000 square feet or 25% of the living area of the principal residence, whichever is greater.
  - d. On lots of 4 acres or larger, the combined area of all detached non-habitable accessory structures (including Sea Cargo Containers) shall not exceed 3000 square feet or 25% of the living area of the principal residence, whichever is greater.
6. The Sea Cargo Container can only be used for storage.
7. A Sea Cargo Container may be allowed in commercial and industrial zoned areas only if there is a legally established primary use on-site and all parking requirements are maintained.

8. Sea Cargo Containers are allowed in all zones temporarily to store building materials during the construction pursuant to an active building permit. If the building permit is expired, the Sea Cargo Container shall be removed with a demolition permit.
9. The exterior of every Sea Cargo Container shall be painted with one of the approved colors. The color shall be indicated on the plot plan. The following colors are approved:
  - a. Flat, non-reflective dark green to match the surrounding area;
  - b. Flat, non-reflective white (this color is typically limited to AG uses);
  - c. Flat, non-reflective, tan to match the surrounding area; or,
  - d. Other solid neutral color that matches the surrounding natural environment (applicant must provide pictures of surrounding area to show compliance)
10. If you have an existing Sea Cargo Container that was legally placed on your parcel (with a building permit and before May 18, 2007) you are allowed to continue the use of the Sea Cargo Container as a non-conforming use for two more years. At or before May 17, 2009, the Sea Cargo Container shall be removed from the parcel with a demolition permit or you have to obtain a new building permit and be fully in compliance with Section 6162 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**You must obtain a building permit before you can place a Sea Cargo Container on your property and you must obtain a demolition permit before you can remove the Sea Cargo Container from your property.**